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ABSTRACT

Significant changes in various demographic patterns include a declining birth rate, regional shifts from the "Snow Belt" to the "Sun Belt" as well as a return to rural America, an increase in female labor force participation, a general change in family structure ("kids with kids," single parent families, unmarried couples, etc.), and changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the United States. Issues stemming from these population trends include: (1) making national policy for different regional impacts; (2) managing and developing school physical plants with uncertain information; (3) fewer clients but greater needs; and (4) fitting social science curriculum to social trends. (CMJ)

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DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES

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DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES

Prepared for the House Subcommittee on
Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education
of the House Education and Labor Committee

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I. DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES

A. INTRODUCTION

For approximately the past five to twenty-five years, our nation has experienced significant changes in various demographic patterns which have or will raise significant educational policy issues for the 1980s. 1/ These include a declining birth rate and an aging population; regional shifts from the "Snow Belt" to the "Sun Belt" as well as a return to rural America; a dramatic increase in female labor force participation rates; a general change in family structure - "kids with kids," single-parent families, unmarried couples, etc.; and changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the United States.

As a result of these changes a number of educational policy issues appear to be emerging. In this paper four of these issues and some of their implications are described in two to three pages each. This analysis is not meant to be exhaustive or to provide immediate answers for the committee. If the committee so desires, one or more of these issues may be explored later in greater depth. 2/ The issues to be discussed are: (1) making national policy for differential regional impacts; (2) managing and developing school physical plants with uncertain information; (3) fewer clients but greater needs; and (4) fitting social science curriculum to social trends.

B. NATIONAL POLICY AND REGIONAL IMPACTS

"We are now entering the age of slowdown."

Kenneth Boulding

The decline in the fertility rate of American women from its 1957 level of 3.7 to its current level of approximately 1.8 has lead to a significant decrease in elementary and secondary school enrollment. Elementary school enrollment peaked in this country at about 32 million students in 1967 3/ and is expected to continue to decline to 1985 and by 1995 the enrollment is expected to return to the level of 1964-1965. 4/

In the high schools the largest senior class ever in American high schools was graduated in 1975. In 1978 the secondary schools enrolled fewer than 20 million and their enrollment is expected to decline until about 1990. The 1990's increase in high school children is a forecasted 26 percent and, if so, that will bring that age group by the year 2000 within five percent of the 1975 enrollment figure. 5/

It does not appear to significantly matter whose numbers or fertility rate one uses. The overall direction is downward. Yet despite these macro-national trends, from 1970-75 some 40 States experienced an increase in school age population, and in many rural areas as well as the Rocky Mountain States, this trend is expected to continue until at least the mid 1980s. Ten States experienced a five to twenty percent increase and nine of the ten losers were in the "Snow Belt" States.

They included:

Enrollment Declines	5-20% Increases
Connecticut	Arkansas
Illinois	Colorado
Indiana	Florida
Kansas	Idaho
Missouri	Montana
New York	Nevada
Ohio	New Hampshire
Pennsylvania	New Mexico
Rhode Island	Oregon
Louisana	Wyoming

In general the 1970-75 shifts in enrollment correlated to the projected change in employment by State - 1980-85. Nine of the ten States experiencing enrollment declines are expected to experience an increase in employment of from two to ten percent. Eight of the ten States which experienced a five to twenty percent increase in enrollment are expected to increase employment by ten to 26.8 percent. 6/

A different set of statistics reveals a similar story. Between 1970 and 1980 Michigan will lose 20 percent of its elementary school enrollment. Between 1980 and 1990 Michigan will lose an additional 20 percent of its elementary secondary enrollment. By 1992 the number of high school graduates in Michigan is forecasted to be one third less than the number of graduates in 1978. By contrast one region in Colorado with a 70,000 population in 1968 has grown to over 300,000. 7/

Non-metropolitan counties have also shown increased enrollments. They registered a net gain of 2.3 million persons in net migration between 1970-76. (By contrast nonmetroplitan counties recorded a net loss of 2.3 million persons due to migration from 1960 to 1970.) 8/

Congress generally is asked to make Federal educational policy from macro-demographic data. Yet many people do not live in a "typical" school district. While overall elementary and secondary school enrollments are down, some States are experiencing large gains and some rural or energy related growth areas may experience even sharper increases. Education, because it is a State and local enterprise, is affected not only by national fertility trends but by the fact that Americans do not stay put. Schools are affected by national and local migration trends. 9/

There appears to be a need for Congress to more closely monitor the projected birth rates as well as regional and metropolitan migratory patterns. 10/ Where possible a periodic examination might be made of social and economic composition of prospective enrollments. Such an assessment might require a more detailed examination of children who potentially require special services -- non-English speaking children, minority children, single parent families, etc.

C. SCHOOL PHYSICAL PLANTS

It is clear that with enrollment declining in areas (primarily Snow Belt States) and enrollment increasing in others (primarily Sun Belt States or rural areas) some schools must be closed and new ones built in others. The problem or issue is that these decisions must be made with partial, fragmentary, and incomplete information. Subject to sudden shifts in our nation's immigration policies, the enrollment rates for grades K through 12 are known for the next five years. After that period of time they are subject to changes in fertility rates; (whose long term direction is unclear); regional population shifts (the durability of which is uncertain); and the size and age composition of our central cities and suburbs. These trends are discussed below and are followed by a discussion of the options for local administrators.

Fertility Rates

In terms of the fertility rate there are two conflicting theories. The first - espoused by Charles Westoff of Princeton University - takes a very long term perspective. According to this theory the processes of industrialization and urbanization have produced a steady decline in average family size. This decline was briefly accerlerated during the Great Depression, and briefly reversed in the 1940s and the 1950s. The tendency downward in the birthrate is believed to be reinforced by a steady

decline since 1960 in the proportion of women marrying at ages 20-24 and by the changing status of women in our society (the working wife). 11/ The data indicate that the proportion of young women 20-24 years old, never married, has increased from 28 percent in 1960 to 48 percent in 1978. 12/ The proportion of women in the labor force has grown from 38 percent in 1960 to 48 percent in 1977, and by 1990, 55 percent of American women aged 16 and over will be in the force. (According to a recent Urban Institute study women will be entering the work force at a rate of about one million a year until 1990). 13/

An alternative theory is put forth by Richard Easterlin an economist at the University of Pennsylvania. 14/ Easterlin's view is based on the theory that the birth rate is a function of the birth cohort size of the childbearing population. According to this theory, when members of small birth cohorts enter the labor market (mid 1980s), they will face little competition from their peers for initial entry positions; will establish careers fairly quickly; can afford to marry early; and will begin to have children. The trend is dominated by inter-generational "fashion." That is (somewhat over simplified), children who grew up in small Depression families preferred to have larger families themselves and children who grew up in larger families have been having fewer children and having them later in life.

Which of these theories is right and which is wrong cannot be determined for another generation or two. A historical data base is required and by then the entire contextual situation may have changed.

Regional Shifts

Regional shifts are likely to continue as individuals and industry seek to settle in favorable climatic areas and/or in energy boom towns. One of the fundamental questions is will any of energy-related boom towns of the 1980s will become energy bust towns ten to twenty years later if the nation shifts from coal related energy to a greater emphasis on some combination of non-fossil fuel?

Urban/Surburban Trends

Whether or not we are experiencing an "urban crisis" or we are in the midst or an "urban renewal" is just one of several related urban/suburban questions. Another equally pertinent question is what will be the impact of the graying of suburbia on our public school system. While some cities may be experiencing a true urban renewal, nationwide the number of persons living in central cities fell by 2.1 million between 1970 and 1976, and the annual net rate of movement away from central cities rose from 2.5 percent during the period from

1970 to 1975 to 3.3 percent during the period from 1975 to 1976. 15/ In the future significant shifts in housing costs, mortgage interest rates, or transportation costs could significantly affect this movement in either direction.

The typical American suburb is no longer (if it ever was) a community of young, white families who are affluent or middle class. In 1976 more than 4.5 million households headed by persons 65 or over lived in the suburbs. Between 1970 and 1976 the number of elderly households rose by 31 percent compared with a ten percent rise in the central cities. This trend probably will continue because of the large number of pre-elderly (ages 55-64) already in place in the suburbs. 16/ At a meeting of the International City Management Association's Committee on the Future Horizons of Local Government, the city managers present noted that, for the most part, ten years ago the dominant interest group in their community was the Parent Teacher's Association. Today, it is the American Association of Retired Persons. 17/ These shifts will undoubtedly put pressure on the older suburban school district to run smaller; more consolidated; and more efficient school systems.

Options for Local Administrators

Legally the responsibility for a surplus school may vary from district to district. The options open to local administrators are multiple, complex, and at times conflicting. Stable or declining enrollment can provide an opportunity to eliminate inefficient, badly located or otherwise undesirable school buildings. A more complex situation, legally and financially, is the school that is partially underused, and from which conventional education probably should not be completely removed. Is it legal, plausible, and operationable to lease out a wing or a floor to other public or nonprofit agencies? How does one determine which users are compatible with a typical K-12 program? Another possibility is to lease the entire building to another public agency until future needs can be ascertained. This is a form of "mothballing". 18/

For those suburban schools in a reasonably good location but obviously experiencing declining enrollments another more speculative possibility exists. The school system may be able to sell the schools and land to a real estate developer who could take possession at an agreed upon future date. The school system would get an immediate infusion of cash and the developer would get a hedge against speculative price increases. 19/ Undoubtedly, there are numerous other possibilities or combinations of the above.

Where new schools are required the situation is less clear. In hearings held in April, 1979, by the House Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education, one witness testified that by the mid 1980s, the large computers in use in 1979 would cost hundreds of dollars and terminals would cost tens of dollars. He felt that this technological breakthrough coupled with rising energy costs could lead to the obsolescence of the concept of a fixed, geographically located school building. 20/ An alternative approach occurs in Okalahoma where to lower construction and energy costs, some thirty schools have been built partially below ground. 21/

Decisions to sell, lease, or build are generally a local decision. However, very little attention is being given to monitoring and analyzing these decisions. An inventory of these developments might be developed by the National Institute of Education or the appropriate are of the new Department of Education. Case studies might be developed of successes as well as failures. The Department of Education might consider providing funds for technology transfer studies; planning for return to rising enrollment at lower grades; conducting "typical" school case studies; analyzing differences between school board and user interests; permitting schools to lease to profit-making organizations; and studying the potential conflict between high schools and junior colleges. 22/

D. FEWER CLIENTS BUT GREATER NEEDS

As noted earlier, school enrollments are down from their earlier highs and are expected to remain down until at least the mid 1980s. For this reason and other economic factors, the public is developing a cost-cutting mentality. 23/ The number of children under 18 years of age fell to 64.1 million in 1977 - approximately the 1960 level, but large numbers of children of the late 1970s may have greater needs and therefore require greater per capita dollar inputs than the 1960 child. During the period of time between 1960 and 1977, the percentage of children living with a separated parent doubled from nine to 18 percent (7.1. million to 11.3 million), and the percentage living with a divorced parent tripled; the number living with a never-married parent was seven times as high (this number increased by 12 percent from 1977-1978); there was a ten percent decline in the number of children living with two parents (from 56.3 million to 50.8 million); 24/ and a sharp rise in teenage pregnancies occurred. These trends and their implications for educational policy are discussed in greater depth in the sections which follow.

Marriage and Divorce

Marriage rates have fluctuated little since 1975 and in 1978 there were about 10.2 marriages per 1,000 population. The U.S. divorce rate has consistently exceeded that of any other large country and between 1965 and 1976, the country's divorce rate doubled from 2.5 to 5.0 per 1,000 population. At current rates

40 percent of all marriages will end in divorce. 25/ Twenty-six States and the District of Columbia have discarded the tender-years doctrine where custody is awarded to the women when children are young. 26/

The number of unmarried couple households climbed in 1978 to 1.1 million - double the 1970 figure and triple the 1960 figure. According to forecasts made by the Futures Group, the figure will rise to three million by 1990. 27/ These trends raise issues in the area of child custody, support, property rights, etc. Custody questions in many cases have not been resolved by the traditional domestic court settlements-for along with these trends, there has been a sharp rise in child-snatching where children are being spirited from homes by aggrieved fathers or mothers. 28/

Teenage Pregnancy

The U.S. teenage birthrate is the highest of any industrial nation in the world, and, if present rates prevail, approximately one in five of today's 14-year old girls will become pregnant while of school age. In 1979 over 1,000,000 teenagers will get pregnant and approximately 600,000 of these children will give birth to other children. The 600,000 annual births, according to a Stanford Research Institute study may cost the Federal, State, and local governments as much as $8.3 billion a year in welfare and medical costs. 29/

For this particular group - teenage mothers, there are higher risks of death and medical complications; suicide and child abuse rates are higher than among older groups; 85 percent of profit and 75 percent of not for profit daycare centers in the United States refuse babies under two years of age; and approximately eight out of ten young mothers drop out of high school. 30/

The Family and Educational Policy

The trends described above deal with the family. To some they might depict alternative life styles and to others they might document the perceived weakening of the nuclear family. In either case the traditional role of the family and the parents may be shifting. In the past and today we assign a high value to the family network because families are considered to be the primary source of nurturance support and meaning to most people and because they form the structure of society. Parents are assigned power and responsibility over their minor children. If we think of education as more than just a delivery system, but also a system of relationships - relationships between teachers and students, between schools and families, and between schools and communities it is obvious that the relationships are changing. 31/ The significant rise in the number of working mothers; the divorce rate and the number of one-parent families; unmarried couples; and "kids with kids" are causing the traditional role definitions to change. By default it appears that some schools and teachers

are assuming new roles and these roles may require, on a per capita basis, more dollar inputs to obtain equal functional output.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Finally increasing racial and ethnic diversity will raise numerous budget and other educational policy issues. Blacks, Asians, and other racial minorities constituted 12.4 percent of the total population in 1970; 13.1 percent in 1975; and a projected 13.8 percent of the total population in 1980. As a percentage of total population non-whites will comprise one out of seven in 1985 compared to one out of eight in 1970. However, the real shift will be seen in the school systems, where because of higher fertility rates non-whites will make up nearly one in five of all children of grammar school age in 1985, and nearly that high of population of 15 to 19 years of age. These shifts may cause difficulties in developing a school busing program. 32/

Immigration policy may raise additional questions. Currently the U.S. has approximately 400,000 legal immigrants and from two to ten million illegal aliens. An exploding population in Mexico could cause a significant increase in these numbers. In addition Congress has passed legislation allowing an additional 14,000 refugees a month from Southeast Asia. Language barriers may be just one factor. In 1976 about 28 million Americans, about one in eight, usually did not speak English at home or spoke a foreign

language as a second language. The 1970 Census recorded over twice as many Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos in America than in 1950. In 1978 there were an estimated 12 million Spanish Americans up significantly from the first Census enumeration in 1970 where the estimate was 9.3 million. 33/

These trends create two groups of issues and any of these issues may well require additional expenditures. First, who is to pay for the elementary and secondary education of sons and daughters of illegal immigrants. Texas has passed a State law forbidding the expenditure of State funds for children of aliens who do not have documents entitling them to be in this country. Dallas school officials say the cost of enrolling all the children could range from $6.7 to 11.7 million dollars. The State notes that there is precedent for this action, for food stamps and Medicaid currently are denied for undocumented aliens. The Texas State Attorney General's Office has said, "Since the Federal Government isn't enforcing the immigration laws and they're not going to give us the money to pay for it, we've decided we're only going to educate our own students." 34/

The second main issue centers on the Asiatic refugees. Some States are experiencing extremely large influxes of Asiatic refugees. California expects refugee numbers in the State to reach 200,000 by 1982. Many of these refugees are poor and illiterate with no skills to assimulate them into the workforce. However,

their most immediate problem seems to be health. In a San Francisco study, 70 percent carried intestinal parasites, some communicable through poor hygiene; 40 percent showed positive reaction to tuberculosis tests; and ten percent suffered from infectious skin ailments. 35/ Is a special health screening program required for the children of these refugees? How often must it be repeated if at all? Will additional screenings be required for all their classmates? If so, how will these screenings be financed?

E. SOCIAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM AND SOCIAL TRENDS

The final issue in relating demographic trends to emerging educational policy issues is how to adjust social science curriculum to long term and significant social trends. Should the curriculum be adjusted to reflect the growing racial and ethnic diversity of the United States as described in the above issue? Or should there be a return to the melting pot concept of earlier days? Because of the limitations of space, only one other demographic trend - the aging U.S. population will be illustrated.

Since 1900, the percentage of individuals in the United States over 65 has increased steadily. In 1900 people over 65 comprised four percent of the total population. By 1950 this percentage had doubled to eight percent and in 1979 it reached over ten percent. Future growth with a number of elderly, as a percentage of total population, will of course be influenced by actual birth rates. By 2030 using Series II or Series III population projection's this percentage is expected to reach from 17 to 22 percent. 36/

These trends appear to run counter to the impressions of the average television viewer. According to a recently released study of the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, most television viewers believe that the number of old people is declining instead of increasing; and that old people are inferior in many ways. The effects of observed were strongest in the under 20 age groups of television viewers. 37/ These observations raise several curriculum questions concerning existing elementary and secondary school social science curriculum. Does the existing curriculum depict the "greying" of America and the many positive attributes of our senior citizens. If not, why not? In a more general vein, is it possible for the education community to monitor social trends and discontinuities so that they are reflected in the curriculum on a more timely basis? Certain basic questions need to be examined before this can become operational. These could be explored by the National Institute of Education, appropriate State consortium's - such as the Southeastern Regional Educational consortium, or an appropriate congressional support agency. The questions include:

- How many people need to be effected before the trend is significant?
- What is the nature of the effect?
- Are there ways of reversing the trend or coping with it?
- How much lead time is required to influence the trend?

- What are the costs?

Many corporations have recently created new staffs to identify new trends and emerging issues, and interpret the implications of these for their organizations. It would seem plausible that such a staff could be created in the public sector to serve the needs of the education community.

F. SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

A paper of this nature is by intent limited and fragmentary. It is merely an overview of some demographic trends and educational policy issues which flow from them. Each of the issues discussed could be the subject of large interdisciplinary research projects and undoubtedly research in some of these areas already has begun. From these issues and the collection of the other papers in this document, the committee can ascertain those long term issues which it might desire to explore in greater depth.

FOOTNOTES

1/ Demography is a branch of the social sciences dealing with the determinants and consequences of population change. It deals with vital and social statistics such as birth, death and marriage, and the size, density, distribution, and mobility of populations.

2/ Several options for further exploration are discussed in U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. Implementing the House Foresight Provision, by Dennis L. Little. [Washington] 1979. 26 p.

3/ Fiske, Edward B. Enrollment Drop Fallout. New York Times. December 13, 1978: 4 B.

4/ Fishlow, Harriet. Projection of School Age Children. Unpublished Draft. March 27, 1979, p. 2. Delivered at the symposium on Population: Implications for Education jointly sponsored by the Population Resource Center and the Institute for Educational Leadership of George Washington University.

5/ Reinhardt, Hazel H. The Ups and Downs of Education. American Demographics, Vol. 1, No. 6, June, 1979, p. 9 and Fishlow, p. 2.

6/ Reinhardt, Hazel H., p. 10 and Careers in the 80's. New York Times, Section 12, Oct. 14, 1979, p. 8.

7/ Educational Staff Seminar, News Letter, George Washington University, 1978, p. 6.

8/ American Council of Life Insurance. Social Research Services. Data Track 5 [Washington] 1979, p. 37. In addition immigration patterns may lead to regional increases in enrollment. This is discussed in more detail later in this paper.

9/ This concept is developed further in Newitt Jane. Future Effects of Decline in New York's School Age Population: An Overview with Recommendations for Further Study. Croton-on-Hudson, August, 1979.

10/ For further detail see Fishlow, pp. 6-9.

11/ Westoff, Charles F. Some Speculations on the Future of Marriage and Fertility. Family Planning Perspectives, v. 10, No. 2, March/April 1978, p. 79.

12/ Population Reference Bureau, Inc. Population Bulletin: Marrying, Divorcing, and Living Together in the U.S. Today. v. 32 no. 5, [Washington] October, 1977 and February, 1979 update pp. 6 and 39.

13/ Smith, Ralph E. The Subtle Revolution: Women at Work. Washington, Urban Institute 1979, p. 16.

14/ Easterlin, Richard A. Wachter, Michael L., Wachter, Susan M. Here Comes Another Baby Boom. The Wharton Magazine, Summer 1979, p. 29.

15/ Urban Institute Urban Residential Mobility. Policy and Research Report. v. 9, No. Fall, 1979, p. 13.

16/ Urban Institute. Suburbia Growing Grayer. June 26, 1979 (unpaginated news release).

17/ International City Manager's Association. Committee on Future Horizons of the Profession. Local Government 2000. Meeting April, 1978 of Committee to which the author served as advisor.

18/ Educational Facilities' Laboratories. Surplus School Space: Options and Opportunities. [New York], 1976, pp. 7-9.

19/ This concept was suggested by Paul Pryde, Director of Policy Projects National Rural Center, Washington, D.C.

20/ U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education. Long-Term Electronic Technology Trends by Earl Joseph. [Washington] April, 1979. Testimony at hearing on future of elementary and secondary education.

21/ Personal Conversation with the staff of Senator Henry Bellmon, September, 1979.

22/ Newitt, Jane. Future Effects of Decline in New York's School-Age Population: An Overview with Recommendations for Further Study, pp. 116, 118, and 119.

23/ Omang, Joanne, Education' Industry Thrives Despite Fewer Customers. The Washington Post, September 3, 1979: 12 A.

24/ U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. The Future of the American Family, by Paul Glick. [Washington], May, 1978, p. 3.

25/ Population Referen Bureau, Inc. Population Bulletin: Marrying, Divorcing, and Living Together in the U.S. Today. p. 18.

26/ U.S. News and World Report, April 30, 1979.

27/ The Futures Group. Update [Glastonbury], undated 1979 newsletter.

28/ According to Rae Gummel, Vice President of Children's Rights, such cases number at least 200,000 a year or double the number four years. See Child-Snatching Epidemic Stirs a Storm. U.S. News and World Report, September 3, 1979, p. 57.

29/ George Washington University, Institute for Educational Leadership, Family Impact Seminar. Teenage Pregnancy and Family Impact: New Perspectives on Policy, Theodora Ooms, Study Director. [Washington], 1979 pp. 69 and 45. Scharf, Kathleen Rudd. Teenage Pregnancy: Why the "Epidemic"? Working Papers: For a New Society, v. 6, No. 6, March/April 1979, p. 64.

30/ Scharf, Kathleen Rudd. Teenage Pregnancy: Why the "Epidemic"? p. 68.

31/ This concept is being developed more thoroughly by David Seeley in work being done for the American Enterprise Intitute's Mediating Structures Project.

32/ Sternlieb, George and Hughes, James W. Current Population Trends in the United States. New Brunswick, The Center for Urban Policy Research, 1978, pp. 26-27.

33/ American Council of Life Insurance. Social Research Services. Data Track 5. p. 30.

34/ Texas Group Helps Find Schools for the Children of Illegal Aliens. New York Times, Oct. 15, 1979, 12 A.

35/ Moriarty, Francis J. The Refugees in California. The Washington Post, Aug. 5, 1979, 1 A.

36/ U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. Some Past Trends and Future Demographic Projections for the United States, by Cynthia Huston and Dennis Little. [Washington] 1977. pp. 10-12. (Report No. 77-162 SP]/

37/ University of Pennsylvania. Older Persons on TV: A Vanishing Breed. [Philadelphia] September 14, 1979. Unpaginated News Release.